Quic. You'l not faile sir?

Exit Mistris Quickly.

Fal. I will not faile. Commend me to her. I wonder I heare not of M. *Brooke*, I like his Mony well. By the masse heere he is.

Enter Brooke.

Ford: God saue you sir.

Fal. Welcome good M. *Brook*. You come to know how matters goes.

Ford: That's my comming indeed sir *John*.

Fal. Master *Brooke* I will not lye to you sir, I was there at my appointed time.

For. And how sped you sir?

Fal. Very ilfauouredly sir.

For. Why sir, did she change her determination?

Fal: No M. *Brooke*, but you shall heare. After we had kissed and imbraced, and as it were amid the prologue of our encounter, who should come, but the iealous knaue her husband, and a rabble of his companions at his heeles, thither prouoked and instigated by his distemper. And what to do thinke you? to search for his wiues Loue. Euen so, plainly so.

For: While ye were there?

Fal: Whilst I was there.

For: And did he search and could not finde you?

Fal: You shall heare sir, as God would haue it, A little before comes me one *Pages* Wife, Giues her intelligence of her husbands Approch: and by her inuention, and *Fords* wiues Distraction, conueyed me into a buck-basket.

Ford. A buck-basket!

Fal. By the Lord a buck-basket, ram'd me in With foule shirts, stockins, greasie napkins, That M. *Brooke*, there was a compound of the most Villanous smell, that euer offended nostrill. Ile tell you M. *Brooke*, by the Lord for your sake I suffered three egregious deaths: First to be Crammed like a good bilbow, in the circumference Of a pack, hilt to point, heele to head: and then to Be stewed in my owne grease like a dutch dish; A man of my kidney; by the Lord it was maruell I escaped suffication; and in the heate of all this, To be throwne into Thames like a horshooe hot: Maister *Brooke*, thinke of that hissing heate, Master *Brooke*.

Foord. Well sir, then my sute is voide, You'l vndertake it no more?

Fal. Master *Brooke*, Ile be throwne into *Etna* As I haue beene in the Thames, Ere thus I leaue her: I haue receiued Another appointment of meeting, Betweene ten and eleuen is the houre.

Ford. Why sir, tis almost ten already.

Fal. Is it? why then will I addresse my selfe For my appointment: M. *Brooke*, come to me Soone at night, and you shall know how I speed, And the end shall be, you shall enioy her loue: You shall cuckold *Foord*: Come to me soone at night.

Exit Falstaffe.

Ford. Is this a dreame? Is it a vision? Master *Ford*, master *Ford*, awake master *Ford*, There is a hole made in your best coat M. *Foord*.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* (STC 22300) LONDON, 1619 NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND (Bute.498) Octavo